LOCAL #5

"The Last Lonely Days of The Oxford Theatre"

Location:
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

You got Megan on the cover already, but let's keep her in that nasty usher's uniform for the whole story.

There are a lot of characters in this issue… unless I specify something, feel free to design them as you see fit.

Reference so far: http://www.flickr.com/photos/radiomaru/tags/halifax/ as well as on the server. I think Mal is going to sketch the interior of the theatre.

Page 1

We're going to open with Megan in a dingy bathroom. She's at the theatre, but we don't know that yet. She's in the employee's bathroom, which probably doubles as the janitor's closet, and she's buttoning up the white shirt of her crappy usher's uniform, getting ready for work. She's looking at herself in the mirror. Her hair, longer now, as seen on your cover, is hanging loose.

She's talking to herself, mumbling, really. We'll have this in smaller text.

MEGAN: HELLO, WELCOME TO THE OXFORD.

MEGAN: HOW CAN I HELP YOU? MY NAME'S MEGAN…

Move closer on her, as she leans forward to inspect a tiny zit on her chin.

MEGAN: HOW *MAY* I HELP YOU…? HI, I'M MEGAN…

MEGAN: UGH.

She stands back and looks at herself, brightly, but not smiling, really.

MEGAN: HI! I'M MEGAN McKEENAN. I'M 22 YEARS OLD. I JUST MOVED TO HALIFAX.

MEGAN: I'M *25*, ACTUALLY, JUST FINISHED GRAD SCHOOL. TAKING SOME TIME OFF--

MEGAN: OH, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, ACTUALLY. DO YOU KNOW IT?

MEGAN: MEGAN. MEGAN McKEENAN.

She looks at herself for a silent panel, as if appraising her own performance.

Last panel, small and tight on her head and shoulder.

MEGAN: WHERE AM I FROM?

MEGAN: ALL OVER, REALLY. NO PLACE EXCITING.

MEGAN: HI, I'M MEGAN.

Page 2

Full page shot of the exterior of the theatre, pulled all the way back to include the entire building. It's early evening, around 5pm, and a few people are walking around, and the Oxford sign is lit up.

The film sign should read

HOLY SMOKE!
WINSLET
KEITEL
TODAY AT
6:30 and 9:30pm

There is a reference shot of the sign, how the titles are stacked like that.

We get the last bits of Megan's mirror soliloquy here.

MEGAN: HI, WELCOME TO THE OXFORD. HOW MANY TICKETS?

MEGAN: I'M MEGAN. HOW MAY I HELP YOU?

Page 3

Full page shot of Halifax at night, a skyline/city shot (reference on server). Purely an establishing/style shot, and since not much of the city will be featured in this issue, I want to get a good money shot in.

If there is a way to have it function as a double page with the previous, in any way, go for it. Maybe having page 2 fade into black on the right side and page 3 coming out of black on the left? Not a literal spread, but something more abstracted? I'll leave it to you, if you can make that work. No worries if not.

Credits will go on this page somewhere near the middle-bottom right.

LOCAL #5
"The Last Lonely Days at the Oxford Theatre"
Story: Brian Wood / Art: Ryan Kelly
Lettered by Hope Larson and Bryan Lee O'Malley

Page 4

A few minutes into the future. Megan is outside the theatre having a smoke, leaning against the exterior wall, having a smoke

Move closer on her. Megan's pretty intense in this issue, rarely smiling – much like you have her on the cover, and despite the fact she's, what, 21 by now, she's going through a bit of a phase that's not unlike the stereotypical damaged high school goth girl, although she does have the trauma to back it up.

She's wearing her uniform, but doesn't have her MEGAN name tag on yet. In fact, she's holding it in her hand.

As she takes a drag, she holds it up and looks at it, squinting at it, the way people sometimes squint when they take drags on cigarettes.

Dropping her hand down, she looks skyward as she exhales, as if her name is a burden, or something that frustrates her.

From off panel:

VOICE: EXCUSE ME, ARE YOU OPEN YET?

She turns and looks at a young couple, arms interlocked, hopeful theatre patrons.

MEGAN: OH YEAH, SORRY. ONE SEC.

Page 5

She pulls a fat chain of keys from the front pocket of her work pants as she walks to the front doors of the theatre.

She gets the front door open and darts inside.

Cut to her in the little ticket booth. She's rummaging through an old cardboard box, like a showbox or a cigar box, and in it are nametags, a dozen or so, those generic ones with employee names stamped into them. We can assume they are all old employees.

Close up panel of her pinning a name tag to her shirt, one with JULIA stamped onto it. If you can angle it, show the MEGAN one in the box, or laying nearby.

MEGAN: OKAY…

As she says that, she's pulling her hair behind her into a ponytail.

The couple step up to buy tickets. Get them in the panel, but we're looking past them at Megan behind the glass, who is sitting up straight and ready to work, and smiling one of her rare smiles.

This should be a large panel, probably half the page.

MEGAN: HEY, WELCOME TO THE OXFORD, MY NAME IS JULIA.

MEGAN: TWO TICKETS?

Page 6

Cut ahead a little bit in time. Megan is standing in the lobby of the theatre. It's empty, presumably the movie is now underway. Megan's looking at her watch.

Shot of her locking the front doors from the inside.

MEGAN: HI…

She pulls her hair out of the ponytail and shakes it up.

MEGAN: HI, HOW ARE YOU?

Move closer as she unpins the Julia tag. In her hand as she does this is another name tag, one that says SUZE.

MEGAN: HI, DO YOU MIND IF I SIT HERE…?

She pins SUZE on her shirt.

She walks into the theatre now, into the darkness.

Page 7

Start with a wide panel showing the theatre. It's not very full – figure about 20% capacity, small clusters of people scattered around. The light from the screen is bright enough for us to make them out.

Megan starts walking sideways down an empty aisle.

She slumps into a seat behind a guy, a man who's sitting by himself, probably in his late 20's. Show this from the POV of in front of the guy, looking back at Megan, so we see his face as well as her. Maybe she sticks a Converse up on the back of the seat next to him? Either way, his eyes dart to the side.

Close up on Megan, who is biting a nail, looking at the back of the guy's head, gathering her nerves.

MEGAN: hi…

She leans forward abruptly, starts talking to the back of his ear. She is perky, not loud, but without a smidgen on hesitation or doubt.

MEGAN: HEY! HOW ARE YOU?

He turns around, or turns his head.

MAN: …HI. I'M GOOD.

MAN: WHAT IS IT?

Megan keeps it going.

MEGAN: I'M SUZE. I JUST MOVED HERE. DO YOU LIVE IN HALIFAX?

As he replies, Megan is climbing over the back of the seat to sit next to him.

MAN: YES…

MEGAN: HEY, MIND IF I SIT HERE?

Page 8

She flops into the seat next to him. He's leaning slightly away from her, looking at her, no doubt sizing her up to whether she is a complete loon or not.

MEGAN: THANKS!

MAN: YOU WORK HERE? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WAS OUT AT THE TICKET BOOTH?

Megan's angling the name tag, with her hand, holding the name tag at an angle so he can read it.

MEGAN: JULIA? NAH, SHE LEAVES AFTER THE FIRST SHOW STARTS. I'M SUZE, SEE?

MEGAN: HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MOVIE BEFORE?

The man turns back to the screen as he replies, I guess determining she isn't going to do anything too crazy.

MAN: NO, I HAVEN'T

MEGAN: IT'S REALLY GOOD. I'VE SEEN IT FIVE TIMES. PERKS OF THE JOB, YA KNOW?

MEGAN: SO I JUST MOVED HERE. TAKING SOME TIME OFF AFTER COLLEGE. IT'S COOL HERE, KINDA SLOW, YA KNOW? BUT I WENT TO SCHOOL IN NEW YORK, SO LIKE EVERYTHING IS SLOW IN COMPARISON, RIGHT?

She keeps going. She keeps her eyes on the screen the entire time as she talks, leaning in to the man, who alternates between looking at the screen, looking sideways at her, and looking around him, embarrassed. No other moviegoers are in the immediate area, I should add.

MEGAN: I GREW UP IN THE SOUTH, MOSTLY. WE MOVED AROUND A LOT, BUT FROM THE TIME I WAS TEN, WE STAYED NEAR

LITTLE ROCK. THEN I GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL I WENT TO MANHATTAN.

MEGAN : NOT REALLY SURE WHERE I'LL GO AFTER THIS. MIGHT GO BACK FOR MY MASTER'S, WHO KNOWS. TRYING TO FIGURE OUT IF I WANNA BE THIS TOTAL BALLS-OUT CAREER TYPE, ALL CUTTHROAT AND SHIT, MAKE A SHITLOAD OF MONEY, OR, YA KNOW…

MEGAN: ...LIKE MORE CHARITY TYPE STUFF. HELP PEOPLE, STUFF LIKE THAT.

The man turns to her.

MAN: WHAT'S YOUR DEGREE IN?

MEGAN: OH… I'M PRE-LAW. SO LIKE, SHOULD I GO TO LAW SCHOOL, OR GET A JOB SOMEWHERE NOW, LIKE SOCIAL SERVICES, ETC ETC…

MEGAN: BORING, I KNOW.

Page 9

The man gestures to the screen a little bit.

MEN: WELL, THE MOVIE'S RUNNING, AND—

MEGAN: YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW BORING IT IS TO STAND OUT THERE IN THE LOBBY FOR TWO HOURS. I ALWAYS SNEAK IN AND GRAB A SEAT, EVEN IF IT'S TECHNICALLY AGAINST THE RULES.

MEGAN: HEY, WHAT'S YOUR NAME? DID I ASK YOU ALREADY?

The man gives up.

MAN: …ANDREW.

MEGAN: AWESOME. I'M SUZE.

He's getting annoyed now.

MAN: I KNOW, YOU TOLD ME.

MEGAN: YEAH. PEOPLE LIKE TO THINK THAT'S SHORT FOR SUSAN OR SOMETHING, BUT I SWEAR TO GOD, LIKE LOOK AT MY BIRTH CERTIFICATE. MY PARENTS NAMED ME SUZE. WEIRD, HUH?

MEGAN: IS THAT A HIPPIE THING? I DUNNO. I DON'T THINK SO. WERE THERE HIPPIES ANYMORE IN 1977? I WAS BORN THEN. HA, I GUESS THAT MAKES ME KIND OF TOO YOUNG FOR YOU, RIGHT?

He's not replying anymore, just staring rigidly at the screen hoping she gets the hint.

MEGAN: SO WHAT DO YOU DO? TELL ME.

Panel of him not replying. She's looking at him. He's just staring at the screen, but the tension is unmistakable.

She turns at looks at the screen, bites her nail.

Another panel, he's getting up to move away from her. She's not watching him now, but she's aware.

Page 10

Change of scene. Let's get a huge panel, ¾ of the page, another Halifax cityscape.

Second panel should be an angle on the theatre, exterior. We can see the ticket booth window, and Megan's in there, head down.

Page 11

Move inside the booth. On the table in front of her, she has a paperback novel open to the front page, like a Penguin classic of some kind, and she's writing her name in it with a pen. She's writing "Property of Megan McKeenan". Don't make that a huge focus of the panel – maybe have it upside down and partially obscured, but we should be able to read it.

Megan has her hair done up a different way, parted in the middle and clipped over the ear, but hanging down on the sides… kind of punky in a cute way.

From off panel, a voice:

VOICE: EXCUSE ME?

A woman is standing in front of the ticket window, around 40 years old. She's peering in and her brows are furrowed a bit like she's troubled.

WOMAN: IS BETH WORKING HERE TODAY?

Megan smiles. We can see her name tag, which is ALEX.

MEGAN: NO, SHE ISN'T IN TODAY. CAN I HELP YOU?

The woman replies.

WOMAN: DO YOU KNOW WHEN SHE'LL BE IN? MY TEENAGE SON WAS HERE LAST WEEK AND TOLD ME HOW AN OLDER GIRL NAMED BETH WAS TALKING TO HIM, ASKING HIM WHERE HE LIVED. SHE GAVE HIM HER NUMBER.

WOMAN: I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO HER, OR FAILING THAT, THE MANAGER. IT JUST ALL SEEMS VERY INAPPROPRIATE TO ME. MY SON IS FIFTEEN.

Megan's been listening to her with concern.

MEGAN: YOU KNOW, I'M NOT REALLY SUPPOSED TO TALK ABOUT THIS, BUT SINCE YOU DID BRING IT UP…

MEGAN: WE ACTAULLY HAD TO FIRE BETH LAST NIGHT FOR DOING THE *EXACT* THING YOU JUST TOLD ME.

Page 12

The woman is still peering through the window.

WOMAN: REALLY? YOU DID?

WOMAN: I DON'T WISH ANYONE TO LOSE THEIR JOB; I MAINLY JUST HAD A COUPLE OF QUESTIONS I WANTED TO ASK HER…

Megan's put down the book and pen and is leaning in conspiratorially.

MEGAN OH NO, YOU HAVE NO IDEA. SHE WAS TOTALLY OUT OF CONTROL.

MEGAN: WE HAD A LOT OF COMPLAINTS, PLUS SHE WOULD DO THINGS LIKE LOCK THE FRONT DOOR WHEN THE MOVIE WAS ON, AND THAT'S TOTALLY A FIRE HAZARD.

Back to the woman.

WOMAN: REALLY?

WOMAN: WELL, I SUPPOSE IT'S JUST AS WELL, THEN.

MEGAN, from off: I'M REALLY SORRY SHE BOTHERED YOUR SON. DID HE TELL HER WHERE YOU LIVE?

Keep the camera on Megan here, as the woman replies off camera. Megan is keeping calm, but you can tell that this whole exchange is upsetting her a little.

WOMAN, off: NO, THANK GOD.

WOMAN, off: MY SON WAS MORE ANNOYED THAN ANYTHING ELSE, BUT HE DID TELL ME ABOUT IT, SO I SUSPECT SHE DID MAKE HIM PRETTY NERVOUS.

WOMAN, off: HE REALLY MADE HER SOUND LIKE SHE WAS CRAZY. IS SHE, DO YOU KNOW? MAYBE A LITTLE OFF?

Cut back to an angle that shows both of them.

MEGAN: I DON'T REALLY KNOW HER THAT WELL. MY NAME IS ALEX, BY THE WAY.

WOMAN: OH! NICE TO MEET YOU, ALEX.

MEGAN: YEAH, I JUST STARTED WORKING HERE RECENTLY. I'LL TELL THE MANAGER YOU CAME BY, IF YOU LIKE. HE'S NOT IN UNTIL THE WEEKEND, THOUGH.

Page 13

The woman, smiling now, gets ready to leave.

WOMAN:	NO NEED. I SUPPOSE THE MATTER'S TAKEN CARE OF. THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, ALEX.

Megan's slid a couple passes through the hole in the window.

MEGAN, off:	NO WORRIES! HERE, GIVE THESE TO YOUR SON. FREE PASSES FOR ANY NIGHT OTHER THAN SATURDAY.

The woman's backing away now, holding the passes up as she thanks Megan.

WOMAN:	THANK YOU! THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP.
MEGAN, off:	BYE!

Cut to Megan in the booth, her smile vanishing off her face.

She rummages around in the box of name tags, pulls out BETH.

Tosses it into the trash.

Page 14

Another establishing panel of Halifax, the city, much like page 10, but only half the page.

The other half is Megan running a mop over the lobby floor, alone, presumably a few hours before opening. Her hair's been cut into a pageboy-style. She has earbud headphones in her ears, disappearing into a CD walkman that's jammed into the waistband of her pants in the back.

Inset panel near the end of this page, moved in very tight on her head and shoulders. Draw in little music notes around her head, and her lips open as if she's mouthing along to the music.

No dialogue, just a little interlude.

Page 15

Start this page with a straight down shot of the box of name tags.

Reverse and show Megan looking at the names, her hand out ready to grab one, but a moment's hesitation before she does. She's sitting in the ticket booth here.

Her hand as it reaches in and picks up a RACHEL.

As she pins it on, suddenly a pounding and a shouting from off panel.

VOICE: HEY!

She looks up and a good-looking guy around her own age is waving through the glass. He looks really happy to see her.

VOICE: JENNY!

Page 16

Megan's gone around and is opening the front door. It's not opening yet, so she's not letting him in, just opening the door a few inches to see what he wants.

MEGAN: CAN I HELP YOU?

GUY: JENNY! IT'S TIM, REMEMBER? WE MET THE OTHER WEEK?

Shot of Megan, who is completely confused and has no idea. And RACHEL is visible, pinned to her shirt.

MEGAN: JENNY? NO… MY NAME'S RACHEL.

MEGAN: THERE'S NO JENNY HERE.

Cut around to the guy, Tim, who is now looking confused himself, but he's sure he's right.

TIM: NO… IT WAS YOU. WHAT'S WITH THE RACHEL? YOU TOLD ME YOUR NAME WAS JENNY.

TIM: YOUR HAIR WAS LONGER. YOU JUST GET IT CUT?

Back to Megan, who now realizes she's been busted, but is unable to own up to the lie and needs to bluff her way out.

MEGAN: …

MEGAN: LOOK, I'M SORRY, I'M NOT JENNY.

MEGAN: I GOTTA GO. SEE YA.

She's shut the door and is walking away. We see this facing her, as she walks towards us, with the guy behind the glass door looking puzzled. She looks petrified.

MEGAN: FUCK FUCK FUCK FUCK

Page 17

Cut ahead a little bit. Show the clock in the ticket booth, reading ten past six.

Megan is selling tickets. She's still Rachel. She keeps her eyes down as she does this – the experience earlier has put her in a down mood.

But soon enough:

VOICE, off panel: JENNY.

She looks up with a start and Tim is standing there, staring at her with an even expression.

TIM: WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU?

Horrified, she leans forward and tries to talk him out of there.

MEGAN: LOOK, DUDE, I DON'T KNOW A JENNY! MY NAME IS RACHEL, AND YOU NEED TO STOP BOTHERING ME.

MEGAN: DO YOU WANT A TICKET OR WHAT?

He's pissed, and slides a ten dollar (Canadian!) bill at her.

TIM: SURE. ONE TICKET, "RACHEL".

Megan fearfully slides the ticket back.

MEGAN: HERE YOU GO.

MEGAN: ENJOY THE SHOW.

Final panel on this page of Tim looking at her, just looking. A mixture of anger and disappointment on his face.

Page 18

Start this page with a large panel of the closed doors that lead to the theatre. HOLY SMOKE! is lit up above, and we're to understand that the movie is still showing inside.

Reverse and show Megan leaning against the opposite wall, looking fearfully at the doors, nervously playing with the watch on her wrist.

Page 19

Much later now. All the lights are off at the Oxford, and Megan is locking up from the outside, getting ready to leave.

She cuts across the street, heading to the Spartan Diner. Behind her we can sorta see Tim following, who must have been lurking around the corner.

He walks into the diner, and sees Megan standing in line presumably getting a coffee or something to go.

He stands behind her in line. We don't see her face yet.

TIM: HEY, RACHEL-JENNY.

TIM: OR ARE YOU SOMEONE ELSE NOW? I DON'T SEE A NAME TAG.

She doesn't turn around.

MEGAN: Can you just leave me alone?

TIM: THE OTHER WEEK ALL YOU WANTED TO DO WAS TALK TO ME. TOLD ME YOUR WHOLE LIFE STORY, GROWING UP IN SANTA CRUZ, SURFING, HIKING, GOING TO BERKELEY…

TIM: WHO'S STORY WAS THAT? SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK IT'S YOURS.

Move a little closer to Megan – we don't see her face yet; we're still angled behind her. She's wiping her nose with the back of her hand.

MEGAN: ***snif***

Page 20

There is a silent panel while they wait in line.

Then Tim leans forward again, talking quietly to her now.

TIM: LOOK, YOU DON'T WANT TO TALK TO ME, THAT'S OK. WE DON'T NEED TO BE FRIENDS.

TIM: YOU CAN BE JENNY OR RACHEL OR WHOMEVER YOU WANT. YOU CAN TELL PEOPLE WHATEVER STORY YOU WANT TO.

TIM: YOU CAN FUCK WITH PEOPLE'S HEADS THAT WAY.

Another panel, similar.

TIM: BUT IT'S AN EVIL, WRONG, FUCKED UP THING TO DO.

Switch around so we see Megan, who is silently crying a little bit.

TIM: AND NO ONE WILL TRUST YOU, OR WANT TO BE YOUR FRIEND. NO ONE WILL LIKE YOU.

TIM: PEOPLE WILL CATCH YOU IN YOUR LIES, AND TELL OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT IT. IT SPREADS, PEOPLE KNOW WHO YOU ARE, AND WHERE YOU WORK.

Switch back around to Tim, and move closer on him.

TIM: I'VE KNOWN GIRLS LIKE YOU. MIND FUCKERS. WHO KNOWS WHY OR HOW YOU GET THAT WAY, AND I'M NOT EVEN SURE I WANT TO KNOW.

MEGAN, off: Then just go away.

Page 21

Similar angle to previous. They're moving forward, slowly, in line.

TIM: TELL ME WHO YOU ARE, FIRST, AND I SWEAR I WILL.

TIM: YOUR REAL NAME, THAT'S ALL I WANT. YOUR NAME AND WHERE YOU WERE BORN, THAT'S ALL I NEED.

TIM: GIVE ME SOME FAITH THAT NOT EVERYONE I MEET IS A LIAR AND A MANIPULATOR. THAT THIS GREAT GIRL WHO TALKED TO ME AT THE MOVIES LAST WEEK CAN BE GENUINE AND SINCERE WHEN SHE WANTS TO BE.

Pull back and show them standing in line. Megan murmurs the following, but so quietly that he can't hear it. We'll put this in a tiny font.

MEGAN: RACHEL SILVER, FROM MADISON.

TIM, leaning forward: HMM?

Move closer on Megan

MEGAN: *RACHEL.* FROM MADISON, WISCONSIN.

He straightens up.

TIM: RACHEL. GREAT. TOTAL BULLSHIT. PERFECT.

Then he turns and walks out, leaving her in line. She's wiping her nose again.

Page 22

She gets up to the counter, where a waitress is waiting.

WAITRESS: WHAT CAN I GET YOU?

MEGAN: UM, A BLT AND A COFFEE, TO GO.

The waitress scribbles it down.

WAITRESS: THAT'S IT?

WAITRESS: BE ABOUT 5 MINUTES. NAME?

Turn around to Megan, who is struck silent for a moment.

MEGAN: …

MEGAN: WHAT?

WAITRESS, off: YOUR NAME, HON. WE'LL CALL YOU WHEN IT'S READY.

Similar panel, of Megan, mouth slightly open, unable to answer.

WAITRESS, off: …

Page 23

Quiet page here, of transitions.

Start with a panel of the skyline. This can be small, just to establish a new day and the passing of time.

Move down to a shot of Quinpool street, not quite at the theatre. It's early evening now, close to the time when Megan would be opening the theatre.

We get to the theatre, and a small crowd of about a dozen people are milling about. The theatre is clearly shut – the lights aren't on.

Move closer – we see a few people reading a piece of paper that's been taped to the inside of the glass door, facing out. It's a simple piece of photocopy paper, and Megan's written a note on it.

Page 24

Large panel, half the page, which shows us what the note says. Handwritten, in Megan's hand, it reads:

Dear Mr. Sandino

I'm really sorry, but I can't come in to work anymore. I have to leave town suddenly, and there's really nothing I can do about it. I'm sorry – you were a good boss and I'll miss The Oxford. Don't worry about my last cheque.

Sincerely,
Megan McKeenan

Second panel, equal in size to the first, our final Halifax city-scene.

THE END